

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LILONG 00260 01 OF 02 161619Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /009 W
-----161632Z 065463 /53-R
P 161250Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 643

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LILONGWE 0260

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MI, US
SUBJECT: FUTURE OF PEACE CORPS IN MALAWI

REF: 1. STATE 034959, 2. LILONGWE 0188, 3. LILONGWE 1448 12/17/76,
4. STATE 279847 11/13/76, 5. LILONGWE 1174, 10/22/76,
6. STATE 261837, 10/22/76, 7. STATE 197095, 8/10/76,
8. LILONGWE 0717, 8/4/76, 9. STATE 186837, 7/29/76

1. A REVIEW OF ABOVE REFERENCES WILL SHOW THAT EMBASSY
HAS CONSISTENTLY HOPED THAT PC COULD BE CONTINUED IN MALAWI.
OUR DECISION TO AGREE TO POSSIBLE PHASE OUT LAST AUGUST STEMMED
PRIMARILY FROM APPARENT LACK INTEREST ON PART GOM, FREQUENT
FAILURE PROVIDE ADEQUATE COUNTERPART TRAINING, AND INSUFFICIENT
OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTACT WITH MALAWIANS. THE POLITICAL SITUATION,
PER SE, WAS NOT A FACTOR AS FAR AS EMBASSY CONCERNED.

2. FOR AT LEAST YEAR PRIOR DEPARTURE PC DIRECTOR WE MADE
STRONG EFFORT TO GET GOM TO FOCUS ON FACT PROGRAM WAS DRYING ON
VINE BUT WITH SEEMINGLY LITTLE EFFECT. AFTER DEPARTURE PCD WE
WERE QUERIED BY GOM CONCERNING PENDING REQUEST FOR SOME 10
VOLUNTEERS OF WHICH WE HAD NOT BEEN PREVIOUSLY INFORMED. WITH
REFTEL (7) IN MIND WE WENT TO OFFICE PRESIDENT AND STRESSED POINTS
PARA ONE, RETURNED PAPER AND SUGGESTED RE-SUBMISSION WHICH WOULD
INDICATE GOM UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT THIS APPROACH.

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3. RE DELLENBACK VISIT WITH PRESIDENT BANDA AS INDICATED REFTL (3)
THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF PC OPERATIONS IN MALAWI AND ONLY BRIEF
REFERENCE TO PC IN GENERAL IN DELLENBACK INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.
MOST OF TIME WAS SPENT IN LISTENING TO PROFESSORIAL LECTURE BY
BANDA ON BRITISH LABOR PARTY. WE LEFT DISAPPOINTED AND UNDER
IMPRESSION BANDA HAD NO INTEREST IN CONTINUING PC OPERATIONS HERE.

4. EARLIER DELLENBACK HAD CALLED ON OFFICIAL IN OFFICE PRESIDENT WHO WAS COMPLETELY NON-COMMITTAL RE PC FUTURE IN MALAWI BUT DID SAY HE WAS DOING A STUDY ON THE SUBJECT AT REQUEST OF JOHN NGWIRI, SECRETARY TO PRESIDENCY, AND EXPECTED DECISION IN FEW WEEKS. DELLENBACK EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT PC PROGRAM DOWN 4 VOLUNTEERS AND THAT IF IT EXPIRED WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO RESUSCITATE. AMBASSADOR REVIEWED PAST DIFFICULTIES RE RECRUITMENT INCLUDING ARBITRARY REFUSALS BECAUSE OF AGE. DELLENBACK ALSO TALKED WITH TREASURY OFFICIAL SHABA WHO EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN POSSIBILITY OBTAINING 4 PCV WATER ENGINEERS FOR WORK IN RURAL AREAS. MET ALSO WITH STANDEN OF LILONGWE LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT WHO EXPRESSED GENERAL INTEREST IN GETTING SOME PCV'S (AS HE HAS FREQUENTLY DONE IN PAST BUT WITH NO FOLLOW-THROUGH).

5. MY ESTIMATE THAT PROSPECTS DO NOW EXIST FOR VIABLE PC OPERATION IN MALAWI IS LARGELY BASED ON BANDA'S INSTRUCTIONS AS REPORTED REFTEL (2) AND FACT REQUESTS HAVE NOW COME THROUGH IN PROPER FORM AND OFFICIALS CONCERNED DO NOW SEEM UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT PC OPERATING CRITERIA. GIS OF LETTER JANUARY 20 AS FOLLOWS:

"RE PEACE CORPS HERE, I THINK OUR MATTER-OF-FACT TREATMENT GOM OFFICIALS INVOLVED HAS BROUGHT FAVORABLE REACTION. ENCLOSED ARE REQUESTS 21 VOLUNTEERS AND GOM AGREEMENT THAT EACH SHALL BE PROVIDED A COUNTERPART OR HAVE EQUIVALENT TRAINING FUNCTION. STRONGLY RECOMMEND PC TRY FILL THESE REQUESTS. WE CAN AND WILL GIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO UP TO 15 VOLUNTEERS WITHOUT NEED FOR PC DIRECTOR ALTHOUGH WOULD REQUIRE SOME BACK UP SUPPORT FROM PC CONFIDENTIAL

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NAIROBI AND SERVICES LOCAL EMPLOYEE IF NUMBER GETS ABOVE 10. REALIZE MANY OF 21 REQUESTS DIFFICULT TO FILL UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BUT HOPE CAN FILL SOME OF THEM. IN FACT, THAT IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN CONTINUE PC IN MALAWI -- A GOAL WHICH YOU AND I BOTH STRONGLY SUPPORT.

"RE WORKING ATMOSPHERE AND DESIRABILITY OF PERSONAL CONTACTS AND ASSOCIATIONS, SITUATION HAS CONSIDERABLY IMPROVED. SOME 700 POLITICAL DETAINEES RELEASED AND PROSPECT ADDITIONAL RELEASES SOON. I WOULD BE LESS THAN CANDID IF I DID NOT ADMIT THAT THE BASIC PROBLEM IN THIS AREA HAS NOT CHANGED BUT I DO THINK IN THE GENERAL AFRICAN CONTEXT PCVS COULD FUNCTION HERE RIGHT NOW ABOUT AS EFFECTIVELY AS THEY CAN ANYWHERE. ALSO, NOTE RE COUNTRY SUPPORT FOR PCVS, GOM WELL AHEAD OF MOST OTHERS IN AFRICAN IN TERMS HOUSING AND DIRECT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS."

ALSO WROTE DELLENBACK FEBRUARY 9 AS SUMMARIZED BELOW:

"ENCLOSED IS COPY OF SECOND LETTER FROM OFFICE OF PRESIDENT

WHICH CONFIRMS NGWIRI LETTER. ACTUALLY, IN MALAWI-PEACE CORPS TERMS THESE ARE FORTHCOMING LETTERS (THE FIRST OF THEIR KIND I HAVE SEEN SINCE I HAVE BEEN IN MALAWI) AND I THINK CONFIRM MY BELIEF THAT GOM REALLY WANTS PROGRAM. IF YOU TELL ME YOU HAD TO SWALLOW VERY HARD AND BLINK SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE YOU COULD ACCEPT FACT GOM SEEMS THINK IT IS DOING US FAVOR AND THAT THERE IS NO WORD OF APPRECIATION FOR PAST SERVICES, THAT IS WHAT I HAD TO DO ALSO. HOWEVER, DO NOT THINK THIS ATTITUDE UNIQUE IN AFRICAN CONTEXT AND ONCE YOU GET BENEATH GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRATIC VENEER THERE IS A WARM AND REAL APPRECIATION FOR THE WORK THE VOLUNTEERS DO AND FOR THE OPPORTUNITY OF A PERSONAL ASSOCIATION WITH THEM."

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /009 W
-----161632Z 064907 /53-R
P 161250Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 644

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LILONGWE 0260

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6. DELLENBACK LETTER TO BANDA MERELY POLITE THANK-YOU
NOTE. RE PC SAID FOLLOWING:

"I HOPE THE OPPORTUNITY AND PRIVILEGE WILL BE MINE OF VISITING MALAWI AGAIN, PERHAPS IN CONNECTION WITH FUTURE PEACE CORPS INVOLVEMENT THERE, AND PERHAPS ON THAT OCCASION TO ONCE AGAIN HAVE THE PLEASURE OF VISITING WITH YOUR EXCELLENCY."

7. COMMENT. AS I HAVE INDICATED, BELIEVE GOM WOULD NOW BE PREPARED BUILD UP QUITE RAPIDLY TO 20-25 VOLUNTEERS. HOWEVER, SKILLS AND TRAINING GOM ASK FOR ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO RECRUIT AND EXTREMELY UNLIKELY THAT BUILD UP WOULD THEREFORE BE RAPID. IN PAST, FEELING THAT BANDA FROWNED ON PC WAS LIKE LEADEN HAND ON MINISTRIES WHO WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN VERY INTERESTED. AT LEAST OSTENSIBLY SITUATION HAS NOW CHANGED AND IT IS MY VIEW WE SHOULD NOW ATTEMPT EXPLOIT OUR OPPORTUNITY. IN THIS I DO NOT FIND ANY INCONSISTENCY RE PREVIOUS REPORTING OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

REGRET DID NOT POUCH COPIES OF LETTERS TO DESK AND WILL DO SO AT
ONCE. WOULD NOTE, AS BEST I RECALL, THIS FIRST EXPRESSION
DEPARTMENTAL INTEREST IN PC MALAWI IN TIME I HAVE BEEN HERE. IT
IS WELCOME, NEVERTHELESS, AND HOPE ABOVE WILL BE OF ASSISTANCE RE
MEETING WITH PC REPS.
STEVENSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VOLUNTEERS, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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